

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

IS THERE A NEED TO TRANSFORM OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM?

by

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ABSTRACT

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This Strategic Research Project looks at our Officer Education System (OES) during WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and OIF/OEF. The Army evolved its intermediate and senior level colleges (CGSOC and USAWC) before, during, and after every major conflict of the Twentieth century, and it continues to make changes to these invaluable institutions into the Twenty-first century. By continuing to make changes to curriculums and learning environments our future leaders will be prepared for the challenges facing them in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations yet to be identified. Minor changes including lifelong learning, maintaining experienced faculty at our institutions, and capturing the experience returning from the battlefield to better educate our officer corps are presented.

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IS THERE A NEED TO TRANSFORM OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM?

To transform America's National Security Institutions to meet the challenges of the Twenty-First Century as prescribed by President Bush in his 2004 National Security Strategy (NSS)¹, and to transform the U.S. Army "in stride" while actively fighting terrorists as stated in the National Military Strategy (NMS)², we must ensure we review how we are currently conducting operations, and more importantly transform our Army to respond to current and future threats facing our great Nation. President Bush referred to the importance of transforming our nation's military during the 2nd Presidential debate on 8 October 2004. He basically stated, we will continue to transform our military in numerous areas that will allow us to achieve superiority now and in the future.³ This paper will focus on educating military professionals while our nation is at war, and why we must allow our education system to evolve, so that it will continue to prepare our leaders for current and future battles.

CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadow networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank. Terrorists are organized to penetrate open societies and to turn the power of modern technologies against us. To defeat this threat we must make use of every tool in our arsenal...⁴

The above quotation provides insight into the differences we as a nation and military face in the 21st century. It's truly not business as usual. Maintaining our relevance across the full spectrum of military conflict requires immediate action, and it requires that action to be decisive. While attacking a ruthless dictator like Saddam Hussein was and remains within our means, we must rapidly and efficiently evolve our forces to respond to threats presented by Osama Bin Laden and other terrorists we have yet to identify. The key to our success will be the ability to strike with speed and accuracy, and equally as important to our success will be our ability to transform the way we think through options and how we will act to decisively defeat adversaries that know no boundaries or rules of warfare. Our education system will play a significant role in preparing future leaders for the intellectual challenges they will face against an equally determined enemy.

We do not know that true face of our next adversary or the exact method of engagement. The threat may come from terrorists, but it could come in the form of cyber-war, a traditional state-on state conflict, some entirely new form of attack, or it may take the form of a natural or man-made disaster. This uncertainty requires us to move away from our past threat-based view ...invest in the future today so we can defend our homeland and our freedoms tomorrow.⁵

BACKGROUND

In 1950, our nation faced a dilemma just as difficult and pertinent as the one we are facing today. What would they do as a nation, with the prospects of expanding revolutionary movements, and a communist regime hell bent on expansion and ultimately the defeat of America?⁶ They responded by action! They produced NSC-68, which was our nation's TOP SECRET strategic plan designed to contain communism.⁷ This plan centered on the premise we could not revert to our pre-war isolationism without the possibility of Russia expansionism, and instead needed to increase our defense spending, thus we would ultimately outspend the Soviets causing governmental collapse through economic means.⁸ The ultimate goal of course was to eliminate communism aggression and expansionism anywhere in the world.⁹ The planners could not have possibly envisioned that the ultimate policy the United States of America would embark upon (the demise of the Soviet Union) would take almost 40 years to achieve. Similarly, President Bush left no doubt how important it was for the Department of Defense to move from an establishment designed to fight and win the cold war to a 21st century element of national power which is capable of preserving and creating options for our nation, against any foe, conventional or unconventional when he addressed the subject in his NSS.¹⁰

To provide President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld with a ground force for the 21st century, General Schoomaker, the current Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army has identified 17 Immediate Focus Areas which will enable the Army to be more responsive as an instrument of national power.¹¹ In my view our leader development and education programs are critical to the overall transformation of the United States Army. Of course, you might argue that the Officer Education System (OES) is not critical to the current fight, therefore, we should not attempt any change to the status quo while our nation is at war. The danger of accepting this viewpoint is that it may negate any opportunity for us to make real technological, doctrinal, and educational advances that are possible precisely because we are at war.

Colonel (Ret.) Douglas A. Macgregor is probably the best-known advocate of transformation in the U.S. Army. His current book on transformation offers great analysis into how we should transform our forces. He makes the following observation concerning transformation and war, "America is at war-and war transforms armies. War does for armies what the marketplace does for business. Combat accelerates change by moving it out of the realm of academic debate and endless speculation..."¹²

Through his above quotation it becomes clear that the current Global War On Terrorism (GWOT) is an accelerant for Army transformation, and he believes we must capitalize on the

opportunity to supplant the cold war school system we currently have with a series of modern institutions designed to foster learning, and that will surely produce warfighters.¹³

While war is driving our current timeline, dollars are always important when you start restructuring or trying to capitalize on technology, so funds are an important ingredient in the Army's transformation recipe, and currently the defense budget is virtually unconstrained due to the GWOT. However, funds are only one element required for change. Our biggest challenge may come from a lack of vision and willingness to emplace a system that is not indicative of the type of learning experience our current senior leaders are most familiar and comfortable with, or progressed through during their careers, yet there can be no doubt our senior leaders want our OES to evolve and support future generations of leaders. We can gain a unique insight into our future challenge by taking a brief look back at where we have been, and what actions our predecessors took to enable us to enjoy the system that we currently have in place, and why they made changes to the OES.

OFFICER EDUCATION SYSTEM - WORLD WAR II

General Eisenhower understood the importance of our military education system, and he once reflected, "there is no activity more important in a man's preparation for war than his periodic return to school duty, not so much because of what he learns in mere facts...For that period he is given an opportunity to think, think in terms of war, without limit on the scope of his ideas."¹⁴

General Marshall was a true pioneer when it came to training and educating our Army, but he may very well have found fault in General Eisenhower's statement, in that if the time away from troops is not spent on studying war then it may in fact be wasted. While they both understood the importance of academics, make no mistake, they also understood the importance of hands-on training and education in a field environment. General Marshall's association with professional military schools spanned his entire career. He was a student and later an instructor at both Fort Leavenworth and Fort Benning. However, he found many issues with the military education system as evidenced by this statement, "Marshall also felt the schools encumbered graduates with elaborate theory and time-consuming technique."¹⁵ Prior to America entering the war all Service schools were halted by the War Department. General Marshall suspended all classes at Leavenworth in compliance with the directive; after all he needed the manpower to train and ready the Army for the fight ahead. Education would come on the battlefields of Europe, North Africa, and the Pacific.

While our nation's industrial and military bases prepared for war, our leaders at Leavenworth looked for ways to re-open courses, and this focus was based upon their belief they needed to prepare officers for the staff assignments they would be placed in during the war.¹⁶ Courses were reinstated and the schoolhouse designed a curriculum that met the needs of the Army. Leavenworth graduated over 5000 interwar year staff officers thanks to their ingenuity at revamping class sizes and length of studies.¹⁷ Was the end product as capable of an officer when compared to those that went through the previous war year standard 10-month course? No one can truly answer this question since we lost vast numbers of these officers during campaigns in both the European and Pacific theaters. What can be measured is best summed up by this statement, "Army and Leavenworth officials knowingly sacrificed quality for quantity in their race to provide the number of officers demanded and they improvised realizing the wartime program would only be temporary."¹⁸ Obviously we do not want to create an educational environment that is built upon quantity of graduates vice the quality of the graduates, and up until now we have been able to refrain from this option.

The U.S. Army War College, (USAWC) was also closed at the outbreak of World War II, however, in 1943 the Army-Navy Staff College was stood up in the same facilities. This college educated several hundred officers from the three services and students from the State Department.¹⁹ Also during this time period, our senior leaders recognized or at least relayed the importance of a joint education in their correspondence.²⁰ General Eisenhower's memorandum of 12 June 1946, focused on the mission of the Armed Forces Staff College, and why the college must teach officers how to conduct theater and major joint task force level operations.²¹

While these leaders understood the importance of educating officers it is just as important to recognize that they were cognizant of the new or changing requirements, both military and civilian, that would face future leaders, and in a unique way they wanted to provide the next generation with a better education than they themselves received. One can surmise they did not support the notion that war was something of the past and we would essentially remain at peace from this time forth; instead they understood the importance of joint operations during war and set the course for our current Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) system albeit in the most infant of stages as an institutional education and training concept.

OFFICER EDUCATION SYSTEM - COLD WAR YEARS

The USAWC remained closed after the war, but in August 1950 the Army reopened the USAWC at Leavenworth, and in 1951 it was moved to its current home at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.²² The decision to reopen the USAWC was based upon reports indicating there

was an educational gap existing between the Army's Command and General Staff College and the National War College, so the Army Chief of Staff General J. Lawton Collins moved to eliminate this gap by adding an additional institution in between the intermediate and senior level schools. The end result, although not intended was another senior-level institution within the Department of Defense, and more specifically another college within the U.S. Army's educational system.²³ The Army made the decision during this time that the USAWC would be held in the same stature as either the National War College or the Industrial College, because not doing so would have created a disparity between the officers that attended the two national schools and those whom attended the service school.²⁴

During the cold war years our military made significant progress in transforming what was being taught, and who attended Leavenworth. Instructors provided their students a well-rounded program that focused on specific threats, their make-up, their goals and objectives, and our cultural differences.²⁵ The one country that garnered most of the focus was the Soviet Union.²⁶ This was not by accident since the Soviets were leading the effort against democracy by promoting and even enforcing their form of government on other nations.

Specifically instructors taught that the Soviet Union was a unique power because it was a totalitarian empire with vast resources and was the headquarters of an international revolutionary movement. Given this situation with the Soviet Union, Lieutenant Colonel Richard W. Whitney, an instructor wrote in Military Review in 1949 that the Department of Intelligence spent 190 hours in strategic intelligence classes on politics, economics, sociology, technology, biography, and topography to "Compile digests of factual intelligence and estimates for war potential of selected nations" which included the Soviet Union.²⁷

While World War II created great changes in the student body and curriculum, especially throughout the war years, there was virtually no change to the number of students attending Leavenworth during the Korean War years, but the leadership at Leavenworth did make changes to the basic program of instruction.²⁸ While these changes were not significant to the overall education of the class, it was definitely a modification brought about by careful analysis and reflection on what effects the tactics, techniques, and procedures used during the Korean War would have on future battles.

The threat and option to use nuclear weapons was being debated and discussed by the students and faculty at Leavenworth in 1957-1958. This marked a significant change in our educational teaching model, and with minor changes has evolved to the current adult-learning model used at the USAWC and Leavenworth today. The adult learning model allows students and faculty members to share their views and ideas in a seminar setting that is structured to

teach members how to think versus what to think. Major General McGarr, the commandant at Leavenworth was a maverick that understood our field grade officers required an education that provided them a complete and informative view of all options available to conduct warfare; therefore, he completely restructured the classes and instruction at the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC).²⁹

The USAWC's emphasis from 1950 until 1990 centered around the cold war, but it once again allowed the college to reexamine the ideals of its founder Elihu Root, which were "national defense, military science, and responsible command."³⁰ The nation's focus was deeply entrenched in the execution of the strategy outlined in the NSC-68 document, which was designed to bring about the complete collapse of communism as a result of engagement and military spending, or defeat through an escalation of arms (arms race). With the end of the Cold War, which resulted in the demise of the Soviet Union, the USAWC further changed its program of instruction to answer future threats. The following statement describes the changes after the Cold War, "The contemporary focus is one of preparing selected military, civilian, and international leaders for strategic-level responsibilities given the uncertainties of a "new world order/disorder" and the anticipated challenges of the 21st century,"³¹ in fact is also representative of the environment within the USAWC after September 11, 2001, or what has become known as 9-11.

CURRENT FIELD GRADE OFFICER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Currently our OES at the field grade level is hierarchical in design, but it has remained a hierarchical structure since its inception. As a promotable Captain or Major an Army officer in the past, was eligible for selection to attend CGSOC at Fort Leavenworth or a sister service or international equivalent school. It must be noted that this system has experienced its last selection board as of Fiscal Year 2005. All basic year groups after 1993 will automatically receive admittance into the Intermediate Level Education (ILE) program either at Fort Leavenworth or at a satellite location (distance education campus) across the U.S.³² The ultimate objective of this program was to ensure we are educating all officers for future service and assignments in the Army. Will this change the basic CGSOC at Leavenworth? Yes, in that only Operation Career Field officers (officers that are combat arms, combat service support, and combat support trained and managed),³³ international students, and sister service officers will attend a 10 month long course at Leavenworth. All other career fields will receive a three-month long course at one of the satellite locations. The satellite locations will be staffed with Leavenworth instructors and produce a Military Education Level (MEL) 4 officer that is also

JPME phase I qualified. A MEL 4 officer has attended either resident or non-resident ILE, whereas a JPME phase I qualified officer has either attended an ILE program, the National War College, or the Industrial College of the Armed Forces which are the only two Service colleges that can award both JPME Phase I and Phase II credit.³⁴ Phase II of the JPME is conducted in residence at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. Previous to the ILE programs officers could gain both MEL 4 and JPME phase I credit through correspondence, however, they did not have an opportunity to enjoy feedback and dialogue with fellow officers. The ILE evolution to our OES will afford all field grade officers a chance to capitalize on the knowledge of their contemporaries and gain additional insight into matters facing our military by taking advantage of the adult learning model.

The second education level for field grade officers is the Advanced Military Studies Program, which adds to the education an officer receives at the CGSOC.³⁵ This is a selective yearlong course that approximately 48 officers have an opportunity to attend. The changes brought about by ILE will not make a significant impact on this program although modifications to the selection process will be required to ensure equal representation across our current branches.

The third education opportunity for field grade officers are Pre-Command Courses (PCC), which are designed to provide officers selected for command at the battalion and brigade level an opportunity to refresh themselves with the technical and tactical applications of their respective branches and as a member of both the combined arms team and joint team.³⁶ This program includes tactical, training, and garrison commands.³⁷ PCC's are conducted at the Army's branch schoolhouses, and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The programs range between three to eleven weeks in duration.³⁸

The fourth and highest level of education for field grade officers (Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel) is the Senior Service College (SSC). Officers must be selected for resident attendance. The USAWC offers a non-resident program. This program is the USAWC Distance Education Program (DEP), which officers may attend if selected. Once selected for the Army's Resident Education Program (REP) or DEP the officer must commit, and once he has committed to either he or she cannot change their decision.³⁹ Where ILE has taken steps to ensure our Army has trained and educated field grade officers at the Major level to fill critical billets by educating 100% of the entire population of officers, our SSC selection process still leaves a large number of officers at the LTC and COL levels without a comprehensive education. This is true at least in a formal education setting, since every officer that is promoted to LTC or COL will not get selected for the REP or DEP. But then again there are many ways to

educate our force such as, traditional classroom settings, web-based distance education programs, and hands-on education gained through experiential learning in various assignments.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR ENTRANCE

It is counter-productive to only train 50% of the force (while this seems at face value to be intuitive, it is anything but), so we tend to train every single soldier, or at a minimum train the trainer who can later train his subordinates. Sergeants understand this concept, but ...we as an officer corps have done the exact opposite for years at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in the CGSOC, and at our SSC located at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Only the top 50% were selected to attend academics in residence at CGSOC, and less than 50% at the SSC.⁴⁰ One might argue it was operational requirements that only allowed 50% to attend, but that simply was and is not the case. Precedence had been set by the Knox-King-Pye board's (board commissioned by the Secretary of the Navy) recommendation back in 1943 "that 50% of all officers of the rank of lieutenant commander attend the Command and Staff Course"⁴¹, and this same board recommended only sending half of the commanders to a senior college or senior-level course. This recommendation was not acted upon during World War II, but after the war all the Services were faced with a dilemma of how they would educate the next generation of officers.⁴² Vision and the ability to see where we were headed allowed this injustice in our educational system to perpetuate until today. It simply is a failure to recognize what we want from our education system, and then ensuring we have the requisite facilities, staff, and students in place to produce the desired outcome.

Currently we have eliminated or exhausted all selection boards for the CGSOC or ILE, but continue to select LTCs and COLs for attendance at a SSC. In my view ensuring every officer has an opportunity to attend schooling either in residence or via another mode is not an option. As a profession we must remain accountable for the type and quality of education officers receive and the quality of work and effort required not only during these schools, but also after graduation or we are not truly a profession. Two well-known military intellectuals (Van Creveld and Macgregor), argue that our education system at the CGSOC and SSC levels are nothing more than factories that produce graduates with meaningless degrees.⁴³ Both authors are absolutely against educating all officers, and in fact argue that this will dilute the real education that is attained. Macgregor is candid in his assessment of what we should do to improve the current selection system, "A written examination for admission to the General Staff College is essential. By publishing the list of required reading and study material, captains would know precisely what areas would be tested and the officers tested would need to perform well. The

top third or quarter of the officers tested would be admitted once the test results were compiled.”⁴⁴

Van Creveld and Macgregor's recommendation to institute an entrance exam may in fact promote continued education by the force, yet their premise that educating all the officers within a year group will degrade the proficiency and quality of the graduate at either ILE or the USAWC is absolutely unfounded. Macgregor does take into account that some officers will not do well on exams, but may do extremely well in tactical assignments, therefore, he contends an entrance test should not necessarily preclude someone from attending.⁴⁵ He does not, however, address the impact a given faculty and student body have on the education of an officer that otherwise might not score well on an entrance exam. As mentioned earlier the adult learning model relies heavily upon the interaction of all participants in the education process, therefore, we cannot just surmise the effects attendance at a formal school will have on an officer and the later career decisions.

At the same time, Van Creveld also believes we must lower the age of attendees by allowing more junior officers an opportunity to compete for seats at both ILE and the SSC levels, “...it is necessary first of all that the age at which students enter them be lowered slightly, perhaps to twenty-eight or –nine instead of thirty-two or -three today. Students should enter the reformed National Defense University at ages thirty-eight or –nine (preferably even younger)...”⁴⁶ He concludes this will entice younger officers to stay in or seek other opportunities within and outside the military.⁴⁷

This concept must be enticing to junior officers based on the chance they would attend schooling at an earlier time in their careers, but also due to the possibilities in earlier joint assignments and promotional opportunities as a result of attending our highest institutions of learning. The real crux of this issue sits upon our ability to challenge the minds of those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, where they have been afforded great leeway in the execution of their duties, and were able to improvise and succeed on the battlefield. Can our current school system allow this to happen?

WHY CHANGE OUR INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR LEVEL SCHOOLS?

TODAYS OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

LTC Bob Pricone, in his USAWC Class of 2002, Strategic Research Project titled: *ARE WE APPROPRIATELY DEVELOPING LEADERS TO FIGHT AND LEAD IN THE FUTURE FULL SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT?*, made the point that our future is immensely different in

terms of battlefield effects, engagements, and decisions required by every leader throughout our organizational structure from the pentagon down to the lonely private sitting at an Observation Post in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Cuba. Our entire officer corps is now faced with challenges we did not envision or necessarily educate them to handle.

In my opinion, in the past we have not trained every leader for the challenges awaiting them at the various levels of staffs where they will fill critical billets, but our current OES is extremely successful at providing the Combatant Commanders with qualified staff officers. Every two years the USAWC sends out a General Officer survey to receive feedback on the quality of graduates in both the USAWC REP and the DEP. This survey does not allow general officers to delineate between the REP and DEP graduate. In 2004 the survey did ask if the respondents noticed a significant difference in the performance of officers graduating from either program, and the data indicated 31% did notice a difference, while 30% did not, and 39% were unsure.⁴⁸ Overall the general officers responding have indicated that graduates of the USAWC are well prepared for strategic level responsibilities and assignments.⁴⁹ The survey does not indicate the lack of proficiency of those officers that have not attended the USAWC, but from the general officer responses it is inferred the difference is noticeable.

Officers from the CGSOC and the USAWC will fill positions on Battalion or Brigade Staffs, General Staffs, Joint Task Force Staffs, or Combatant Command Staffs throughout the vast majority of the remaining portions of their military careers, but those that do not attend either the CGSOC or the USAWC are left with almost no formal schoolhouse training to fall back on and must rely on their field experiences, but our officer educational model is not based upon just one pillar, but upon three pillars consisting of "institutional training, self-development, and operational assignments."⁵⁰ Institutional training consists of all military schools that officers attend including precommission education within the Reserve Officer Training Corps through the SSC. Self-development is the pillar that relies on individual officer decisions to participate in the various programs including correspondence courses, reading programs, and graduate degree programs. The operational assignment pillar is the basis for our experiential learning within the military. It consists of every assignment throughout an officer's career, but it is readily accepted by most officers that the branch qualifying jobs such as, Company Command, Battalion or Brigade XO or S3 are the assignments where an officer learns the most about our profession. However, there are branches within the Army that have entirely different career progressions, yet those officers still undergo substantial professional growth at various times throughout their careers.

It must be acknowledged that operationally we are stretched very thin at this time due to the GWOT. The three pillars may have reached a point in time where they no longer are equal or even capable of being equal to each other. Measures including stop-loss (retaining service members past their commitment) and stop-move (retaining all members within a unit after the unit has been identified for deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom) have been implemented to mitigate the turmoil to the force; however, even our SSC has felt the pressure to make subtle changes to the way they were conducting operations as was evidenced in a Baltimore Sun newspaper article, *'Wartime Needs' Extending Tours Of Army Officers*.

"The Army is planning to double the service time for hundreds of officers going to Iraq and Afghanistan – an effort to meet "war time needs" that would include pulling officers out of military professional schools or delaying entry into these academic programs so they can deploy overseas, officials said...One Army officer said there are plans to pull at least a dozen officers from the current 215 studying toward master's degrees in strategic studies at the Army War College in Carlisle, PA., to help meet the need for war-zone officers."⁵¹

Unfortunately, we will not understand the impact of taking these officers out of the schools for some time. We may find they return to the schoolhouse with an improved understanding of the conditions and strategic issues in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their ability to think through complex problems as a result of the initial education they received at the USAWC, coupled with the experience they gained in the operational assignment may truly impact our views on what is the best way to challenge and prepare leaders for the future.

EDUCATING GENERATION OIF/OEF

Borrowing from Dr. Leonard Wong's monograph: *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom*:

"...General Schoomaker has shown that he is comfortable with exposing leaders to complex, ambiguous environments. Statements such as, "What makes a great team is what happens after the ball is snapped," "You're not learning unless you're operating in the zone of discomfort," and "You can't organize the chaos of the battlefield" reflect a perspective consistent with notions of flexibility, adaptability, and innovation."⁵²

This quote provides direct insight into where and how we must lead the evolution in our OES. By recognizing our education system is not currently designed to stress, nurture, and develop a lifelong yearning for excellence is a start. It is extremely easy to understand how different and demanding the decisions that our young and seasoned officers are now faced with in Iraq, Afghanistan, and on numerous staffs across the globe compared to those that were

required prior to 9/11. Transformation without educational reform is simply change without longevity. Our force's experience from OIF/OEF will help evolve our OES, but we must listen carefully to those officers returning from these battlefields and capitalize on their lessons learned, but ultimately induce the stress that they underwent on the battlefield into the classrooms and even training at our Combat Training Centers.

The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army outlines findings and recommendations based on input from the field. One of the recommendations concerned education of the officer corps, but this may be a quality versus quantity issue.⁵³ With the commencement of Intermediate Level Education where all field grade officers will now attend advance military education (CGSOC), we will eliminate a long perpetuated wrong. Promotion and selection boards will no longer place the same significance on attendance at Fort Leavenworth's CGSOC that was so pervasive throughout the last 60 years of our military, since all officers will complete the requisite requirements for their career fields. The reward is better-educated field grade officers arriving to units.

Unfortunately, we continue to send small populations from the active, reserve components, and civilian sectors to our SSC classes. It appears there are no current plans to increase the size of classes at our War Colleges; therefore, we may in fact fail to educate a vast majority of our eligible officer corps.⁵⁴ The cost of this nearsightedness is a lack of prepared senior leaders ready to contribute at the highest levels of the Department of Defense and our Service. However, the USAWC has made strides to compensate by educating a large number of LTC's and COL's through its DEP, "The USAWC Department of Distance Education (DDE) Program takes two years to complete and has an average student population of 300 in each year group. To date, over 5000 students have graduated from the program."⁵⁵

While it would be ideal to send every officer to the USAWC at Carlisle it is not feasible due to funding, facilities, housing, operational requirements, and more realistically it is not needed at this time. The DEP offers an exceptional program for officers that are selected to attend. Just like the USAWC resident course, an officer must be selected by a board to enroll in the DEP. While this still denies a percentage of the rank population, it also ensures only those officers with a reasonable chance for continued service and positions of greater responsibility are using the Army's resources. Unlike the CGSOC selection, where decisions were made at a very early period in a career, this decision is based upon a successful career worth of performance (approximately 20 years of service), and it is designed to provide them with the necessary tools to continue serving as strategic leaders, senior staff officers, or advisors to strategic civilian leaders.

Currently our OES does not cease to provide educational opportunities after an officer completes the SSC and is granted Military Education Level 1, which is the highest education level in the military education system. There are several chances for leaders to continue their growth and educational learning, such as the Post-Senior Service College program offered by the USAWC, "The War College developed the Strategic Leader Refresher Course (SLRC) to provide refresher training for those graduates that enter "strategic" level assignments 3 to 5 years after graduating from the War College."⁵⁶ While opportunities exist to expand or refresh an officer's knowledge, it is still imperative that we do not overlook every option available to continue the learning process on our own.

A recent transformation article where the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Myers was interviewed provides great insight into the future importance of transforming our education system when he stated, "If you look at the lieutenant colonel in today, they have anywhere between 16 and 21 years of service, so they were brought up primarily in the Cold War. That's where they were educated, that's how they were trained, by those precepts, and that's what they are living with."⁵⁷ We must recognize why we have done a particular task a certain way, and abandon those techniques that no longer provide a solution that fits the current conditions.

This is the key as to why we need to evolve our education institutions. The real root of the problem is figuring out what they should look like. The *USAWC Dean's Decision-Making Input to Carlisle Barracks (CBKs) Facility Process Action Team (PAT) 3 Dec 01, THE FUTURE CLASSROOM OF THE FUTURE: USAWC 2010*, is a document that identifies several areas where our educational experiences during residency will differ with those of previous years in that there will be more reliance on Information Technology, on-line curricular materials will increase exponentially, electronic media use will increase, and exercises that will occur between seminar rooms. At the same time there are several areas that do not appear to change at all. The main seminar group will remain the central element of learning, and focus will remain on process and systems vice products.

Another USAWC document, *Teaching at the United States Army War College*, provides additional insight into the current program of instruction.

"Learner-centered, inquiry-driven graduate study is what we do in the academic program at the U.S. Army War College (USAWC)...Our goal is to transform proven leaders in tactical and operational roles into leaders responsible for the development and implementation of U.S. foreign policy...We must teach at the conceptual level."⁵⁸

It is important that we also take into account how the current generations of officers have been educated, and possibly why that educational process has contributed to the successes we have experienced, or in some cases have not experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan. Officers have progressed up the educational ladder for certain, however, they have also progressed through a vast maze of educational learning afforded them in everyday experiences. These experiences range from computer simulations to rotations at one of our Combat Training Centers like the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, or the Combined Maneuver Training Center at Hoenfels, Federal Republic of Germany. At each of the above training centers our leaders from private through general have gained an invaluable amount of experience, and with the transitions our centers are undergoing at this time the benefits will reach far into the future. Our officer corps is educated continuously throughout their careers.

LIFELONG LEARNING

As with any profession there are formal military schools within the Army where individuals go to gain additional training and experience, but we also have an informal learning environment that produces an equally beneficial education. This occurs while we perform our everyday duties throughout our careers. As previously stated, military education cannot be limited to only formal schools, and it must allow for commanders and mentors to enter into the equation, as this is vital to our overall system success. An area that definitely needs more emphasis is the requirement of our officers to seek out additional educational opportunities.

Our joint doctrine provides us invaluable guidance on continuing our education beyond the classroom of our formal school system. The Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) clearly outlines the need for officer continued education beyond what the formal schooling system offers, and places the onus on the officer corps to seek out opportunities throughout their careers to accomplish this goal.⁵⁹ CJCSI 1800.01B is the OPMEP, which states, "Professional development is the product of a learning continuum that comprises training, experience, education and self-improvement. The role of PME is to provide the education needed to complement training, experience and self-improvement to produce the most professionally competent individual possible."⁶⁰

While we in the Army have numerous reading lists associated and sponsored by senior leaders at the Army level, branch chief level, and various other school levels the real issue concerns what we as leaders do with these lists. In many cases commanders develop a reading program and sponsor Officer Professional Development sessions where junior and

senior officers meet to discuss the lessons learned or lessons that can be applied to current situations from a respective book. My experience has taught me these sessions can be extremely valuable as long as a dialogue develops and it is not taken back down to a strict discussion model of senior officers providing only their perspectives and junior officers attending an oral book review.

Written book reviews, oral briefings on either branch specific information, or non-branch specific information allows all officers no matter what their rank to learn, research, and present a product for review and critique. The key to this learning technique is setting an environment based on producing better professionals. Our Officer Professional Development programs are invaluable sources of building on our education system, but only if used, and used correctly.

Previous generations of military officers had the foresight to develop and mentor their subordinates both on and off duty; however, they did not take full advantage of the benefits such actions resulted in when they designed our current OES. Our current OES does not take advantage or recognize the sheer importance of senior leader mentoring and coaching of the officer corps. It is apparent that some leaders have an innate ability to produce superior officers from their subordinate pool. One might argue these officers were superior all along, yet no one can argue that there is a distinct advantage gained by receiving individual coaching and mentoring from a senior officer with the intent of developing future leaders. General Marshall was General Pershing's aide-de-camp during World War I, and this relationship made a significant impact on General Marshall's views and actions concerning our officer education system including length, locations, curriculums, and faculty throughout his tenure in the Army.⁶¹ One cannot over emphasize the importance of the education gained by captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, and even colonels during their assignments as assistant staff officers, primary staff officers, and commanders, and that this experience based education is a vital part of our OES, although it is generally overlooked.

While both, General's Marshall and Pershing restructured the Army's educational and training systems they did so largely due to what they perceived to be its inadequacies to develop leaders that were prepared to think beyond simple maneuver graphics and military terms.³² Lifelong learning is not confined to just one of the pillars that make up the Army's educational model, but it transgresses across the entire system. Officers such as Pershing, Marshall, Eisenhower, and Powell did not stop learning even when they left the military, and we should not limit our learning to just military subjects or schools. Lifelong learning needs to seriously take military funded civilian education opportunities into account, and weigh the benefits vice costs associated with this program.

CIVILIAN DEGREES AND INFLUENCE

Our military must seek out opportunities to educate our officers at every level or tier of post-graduate institution both here at home and abroad. Lessons learned regarding the influence our civilian institutions have had on our military leaders throughout our history have been ignored over the last half of the twentieth century, due primarily to officers believing and in some cases perpetuating the non-truth that seeking civilian degrees other than while attending Leavenworth, a SSC, or to teach at the United States Military Academy is terminal to a career. During World War II, General Marshall was faced with a huge problem of trying to convince President Roosevelt that we would require an all out effort by each of our services if we were intent on defeating Nazi Germany.⁶² Thanks to our pre-war educational programs he found a little known major that was more than equipped to convince our senior leaders what awaited on the European continent.

“During his two years in Berlin, Wedemeyer had the privilege of listening to Haushofer present MacKinder’s theories on lecture on geopolitics, Oberth and von Braun lecture on rocketry, and jet propulsion, and many of Germany’s foremost military thinkers, such as Heinz Guderian’s lecture on the future of warfare. Marshall knew this and gave Wedemeyer the task of drafting the paper that would go to the president and, ultimately, convince him of the requirement for American armies to land on the European continent and the home islands of Japan. Marshall knew that the course of instruction at Fort Leavenworth was anachronistic. It could not produce an officer with the required intellectual and professional depth to perform the task of persuading Roosevelt of the critical role that army ground forces would play in the defeat of Germany and Japan.”⁶³

Our allies and coalition partners have recognized the benefits of an American education, and immersion into our culture. The 21st century only increases the importance of studying various cultures, and experiencing firsthand their lifestyles, politics, religious practices, and military programs. Major General Scales, a former Commandant at the USAWC recognizes the significance of continuing the education process beyond the classroom, and in a *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* article he stated, “Soldiers who spend time overseas immersed in foreign cultures...should be regarded for their efforts. At the heart of a cultural-centric approach to future war should be a cadre of global scouts, well educated, with a penchant for languages and a comfort with strange and distant places.”⁶⁴

In some cases pursuit of a civilian degree is significantly more advantageous to a branch than attendance at a military school. The benefits of gaining additional expertise in a specific language would enable Military Intelligence officers to delve more into societal and threat issues across their respective areas of expertise. Two other branches that could make large gains by

sending officers to civilian universities are the Acquisition Corps and Judge Advocate Generals Corps. But over the last 50 years we have significantly reduced the numbers of officers that are sent to study in our civilian universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our OES has always produced officers that were capable of performing their duties during times of peace or war, and in my view it still is accomplishing this mission. In order to maintain its relevance and continue to meet the needs of the Army while we are at war, there are some minor changes needed to enhance the overall effectiveness of the OES. The recommended changes are centered on lifelong learning of the military professional at the MAJ, LTC, and COL levels, maintaining experienced faculty that further the educational process and competency of ILE/USAWC graduates, and capturing the experience returning from the battlefield to better educate follow-on classes. Ultimately the goal is to produce a better-educated officer, who is capable of handling any crisis that presents itself in the 21st century.

Our lifelong learning program is tantamount to the Army's ability to provide officers with the necessary education to respond to crises around the globe. We can impact lifelong learning by ensuring we as an officer corps are mentoring and coaching our subordinates. Mentors and coaches will have to address changes brought about due to transformation. One such change is how career paths may no longer be valid, or at least those paths that the mentors and coaches took in the careers. We must ensure our officers are not being moved from one position to another just to "punch a ticket". The Army plan to stabilize the force is counter to the previous program where homesteading was frowned upon, yet it will create opportunities for officers to stabilize in those positions where learning is not gauged by time in position, but in proficiency.

We need to increase the number of officers that we send to civilian universities for advance degrees. By doing this we will create the necessary base of qualified and knowledgeable officers capable of performing duties as linguists, civilian, mechanical, and aeronautical engineers; information operation specialists, cultural experts, computer programmers, and simulation experts to name just a few. The rewards of sending officers to graduate schools may also impact other officers through mentoring and coaching. If we recognize this shortcoming and move to start sending our best and brightest to civilian graduate schools the eventual windfall will be felt at every level of the Army, and this will be a good thing for not only our officer corps, but also our junior officers that are looking for new challenges.

Another benefit of increasing the number of officers we send to civilian schools is the ability to stay in touch with the citizens of our country, and to gain the experience of meeting and learning from foreign nationals. Currently our promotion and selection systems are not designed with this change in mind. An officer that chooses to seek a graduate degree that is fully funded may be at risk for continued selection for schools or promotion, although this is not an official policy of the United States Army. This obstacle can be mitigated through a complete overhaul of the officer development and career management programs or at a minimum be sent to boards in special instructions.

The faculties at both Leavenworth and Carlisle should have the experience, either militarily or academically that qualifies them to teach our future leaders. The USAWC's faculty consists of faculty instructors that are Army COLs or other Service equivalent ranks, or civilian professors with Ph.Ds. As mentioned earlier in this paper the Army relies heavily on experiential learning, as a means to educate our force, therefore, in my view the faculty at Fort Leavenworth should at a minimum be LTCs or civilian Ph.Ds. Again it will take senior leader involvement to change the current management and assignment procedures. OIF and OEF have provided our military with significant numbers of Subject Matter Experts and we need to capitalize on this experience base at every opportunity. There is no substitution for experience, especially in the GWOT. Faculty members that do not receive tenure should return to the force to regain currency. This can be accomplished by reassigning instructors every two to three years, or through an exchange program much like the USAWC does with its instructors.

The Navy War College currently is a great example of an institution that is designed to meet the needs of the force, since they run two academic classes per year. It must be noted that they have not reduced the quality of their instruction by doing this, but in fact have maintained quality and met the needs of the fleet. The Vice Chief of Staff of the Army has just approved two classes for ILE at Fort Leavenworth starting in FY06, and this will create the throughput of officers that is needed within the Army.⁶⁵ The USAWC has not been asked to change the number of classes they graduate yearly. The current action to send officers to fill specific requisitions in OIF/OEF, and then return them the following year to complete their studies is an example where the USAWC is trying to meet the objectives of our field Army, as well as ensuring the future of our Service. Retaining some students with recent experience as faculty at Leavenworth and Carlisle will only strengthen our educational system.

CONCLUSION

We need to break old paradigms, and get continued support and vision from the Army's Senior Leadership. They must make a commitment to our officer corps that education is going to change, and that we will be required to make an equal commitment to our personal education and learning process. Finding out what whether or not our leadership is dedicated to this principle is easy, and as evidence we only need to look at the recent changes at our training centers and branch specific schoolhouses. Our training centers have adjusted to meet the needs of our force, and our schoolhouses are constantly looking for new ways to teach current combat tactics that are producing results on the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must also take advantage of technological advances that offer opportunities in education. Learn from our civilian institutions. Learn from other militaries. Continue to query the field and implement their recommendations when warranted.

The challenges facing our Army are many. This is still a people organization, so all the transformed organizations and new equipment will mean nothing without officers that are prepared to lead them to victory in the 21st century. In general, our Defense Department and Service are headed in the right direction with respect to transforming for the 21st century against threats that are still unforeseen at this time. My research indicates our OES has evolved over time, and it has always produced officers that were able to think through critical issues and recommend strategic, operational, and tactical options to military commanders and civilian leaders. The OES will undergo minor modifications as a result of the normal input from students, faculty, review boards, and field commanders, but drastic transformation or change is not required at this time.

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